



GUARDIAN OF PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATE

November 7, 2008

Preparedness and Planning

Chemical-Biological Warfare Exposures Website

The Defense Department has launched a [new website](#) to educate the public about chemical and biological testing conducted from the early 1940s through the mid-1970s. This website is designed to provide service members, veterans, their families and the public with information on what happened during chemical and biological testing conducted years ago that potentially affected the health of those who served.

Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act

On October 17, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency finalized several changes to the Emergency Planning (Section 302), Emergency Release Notification (Section 304) and Hazardous Chemical Reporting (Sections 311 and 312) regulations that were proposed on June 8, 1998 (63 FR 31268). Local Emergency Planning Committees and fire departments should become familiar with the new regulations. For more information, please visit the Office of Emergency Management [website](#).

Incidents Targeting Agriculture and Food Systems 1915-2006

The Center for Nonproliferation Studies has posted a [chronological list](#) that includes allegations and threats, along with confirmed incidents, of deliberate use of chemical or biological agents to contaminate the food supply at any point of the "food continuum" from harvest or production to the consumer, with the intent to cause death, sickness, or economic damage.

Blueprint for a Healthier America

The public health advocacy group Trust for America's Health released a blueprint designed to help modernize and improve the nation's public health system. [The blueprint](#) calls for the creation of a "stable, reliable funding stream for public health" and provides a series of recommendations for addressing the \$20-billion shortfall in public health funding. Specifically, the blueprint calls on officials to increase federal spending by \$12 billion and state and local spending by \$8 billion annually across the next four to five years.

Disease Notification Heads for Standardization

State epidemiologists and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are on their way to creating a national [standard list](#) of health conditions about which public health authorities should be notified. The working list has sixty-eight diseases such as typhoid, AIDS, *E. coli* infection and anthrax. Now the epidemiologists, through their association, the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists, and the CDC are working to specify the point at which notification of a disease should occur and what information should be supplied for each disease.

News

Melamine Levels in Food

The FDA and WHO have both released guidance documents regarding the safe levels of melamine in foods. These documents are a result of worldwide recent contamination of baby formula. See [page 2](#) for details.

Universal Influenza Vaccine?

Some researchers believe that a universal influenza vaccine could provide protection of a pandemic strain of the virus. See [page 3](#) for more information.

Emergency Communication Tools in Multiple Languages

The CDC has taken steps to bridge the communication gap by creating and translating emergency public information documents into many additional languages. See [page 4](#) for details.

Table of Contents...

Preparedness and Planning	1
Surveillance	3
Communications.....	4
Pandemic Planning	5
Regional News	5
Training & Education	5

Read the Next *Guardian* Issue!
November 21, 2008

Security at BSL-4 Laboratories

Currently, all operational biosafety level (BSL) 4 labs are registered with, and regulated by, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Only biosafely level (BSL) 4 labs can work with agents for which no cure or treatment exists. The Government Accountability Office (GAO) was asked to perform a systematic security assessment of key perimeter security controls at the nation's five operational BSL-4 labs. [GAO recommended](#) that the CDC Director take action to implement specific perimeter controls for all BSL-4 labs to provide assurance that each lab has a strong perimeter security system in place. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) agreed that perimeter security is an important deterrent against theft of select agents. However, HHS indicated that the vulnerabilities GAO identified are the result of risk-based planning and that further study is required prior to additional regulation.

Acute Exposure Guidelines for Select Airborne Chemicals

As a first step in assisting local emergency planning committees, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency identified approximately 400 extremely hazardous substances largely on the basis of their immediate danger to life and health values. This report is the seventh volume in the series Acute Exposure Guideline Levels for Selected Airborne Chemicals. You can also read the full [text online](#) for free.

Disaster Preparedness to Meet Children's Needs

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) has been involved in disaster preparedness efforts for many years. The AAP is currently redesigning their website. [The website](#) represents one step to ensure that all pediatricians and other health professionals, parents, care givers and teachers, policymakers, and communities have the information they need to become better prepared for a disaster. It's a one-stop shop and a great resource.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Treatment for Children and Teens

Individual and group cognitive behavioral therapy is effective in reducing depressive disorders, anxiety, post traumatic stress disorder or other trauma symptoms in children and teenagers. Mental health organizations have estimated that more than 75 percent of U.S. mental health professionals who treat children and teens with post traumatic stress disorder are using therapies that are not known to be effective. This report encourages clinicians to use the therapies that are proven to be effective. The CDC Community Guide Branch provides [systematic reviews](#) of the effectiveness of selected population-based interventions designed to reduce or prevent violence by and against children and adolescents including strategies to reduce the psychological harm from traumatic events.

Hazardous Materials Exposure Guide

A step-by-step medical [response guide](#), produced by the Minnesota Department of Health, includes information on: supportive treatments, basic steps of decontamination, an exposure guide, chemical asphyxiants, simple asphyxiants, cholinergics, corrosives, hydrocarbons, irritant gases, what information to gather, how to take blood samples, and how to take a urine specimen.

Melamine Levels in Food

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued an [interim safety and risk assessment](#) for Melamine and Melamine-related compounds in food. In food products other than infant formula, the FDA concludes that levels of melamine and melamine-related compounds below 2.5 parts per million (ppm) do not raise concerns. The World Health Organization also published [preliminary guidance](#) to help national authorities decide about possible health impacts of melamine levels in food.

Railroad Carrier Employee Exposure to Radiation Study

On October 1, Congress passed the Federal Railroad Safety Improvement Act of 2007. [The Act](#) states that the Secretary of Transportation shall, in consultation with the Secretary of Energy, the Secretary of Labor, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Chairman of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, as appropriate, conduct a study of the potential hazards to which employees of railroad carriers and railroad contractors or subcontractors are exposed during the transportation of high-level radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel. Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall transmit a report on the results of the study. The Secretary of Transportation may issue regulations to protect railroad employees from unsafe exposure to radiation during the transportation of radioactive materials.

NIOSH Seeking Collaboration with Police and Fire Departments

One of the primary responsibilities of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) is to respond to requests for health hazard evaluations (HHEs) at workplaces in the United States. The purpose of the evaluation is to find out whether there is a health hazard to employees caused by exposure to hazardous materials or conditions. Recently, NIOSH received two HHE requests from public safety departments in Ohio: a municipal police department and a township fire department. When the HHE is completed, NIOSH will publicly publish final reports giving findings and recommendations for reducing or eliminating the health hazards evaluated. NIOSH can respond to requests from employees of state or local government agencies. However, the cooperation of the employer may be required. For more information contact Kenny Fent by phone or email (513-841-4569, kfent@cdc.gov) or visit the NIOSH website.

Universal Influenza Vaccinations

Researchers from Toronto followed influenza-associated mortality, hospitalizations, emergency department (ED) use, and visits to doctors' offices associated with a free provincial influenza immunization program. Ontario (Canada) instituted a program that provides free influenza immunizations to anyone 6 months and older. The researchers found that universal influenza vaccinations helped to relieve the burden of influenza related illnesses on the health care system. The PLoS One article is [available online](#).

Surveillance

Raccoons Are Reservoir of Influenza A

The journal of *Emerging Infectious Diseases* published a study showing that wild raccoons are reservoirs for influenza A viruses. According to the researchers, wild raccoons can be infected with both avian and human influenza A viruses. They suggest further research on their role in transmitting the influenza virus to humans. [The article](#) is available online.

Migratory Waterfowl Transport Influenza

Researchers at the U.S. Geological Survey along with the U.S. Fisheries and Wildlife Services tested over 1400 pintail ducks to estimate the extent to which Asian and North American pintails use the same nesting and moulting areas in Russia. The highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza virus was detected in Whooper Swans at three locations in Japan between 21-28 April, 2008. Whooper Swans and Northern Pintails frequently occur together at wintering and migration areas in Japan. Therefore, it is [suspected](#) that North American

pintails could transport the H5N1 virus to other waterfowl on their migratory flyway.

Where Do Colds Linger in Your House?

Scientists at the University of Virginia tested surfaces in the homes of people with colds. Researchers started with thirty adults showing early symptoms of colds. Sixteen tested positive for rhinovirus, which causes half of all colds. They were asked to name ten places in their homes they had touched in the past eighteen hours, and researchers used DNA tests to hunt for rhinovirus. Commonly touched areas like refrigerator doors and handles were positive about 40 percent of the time for cold germs. Next, the researchers deliberately contaminated surfaces with participants' mucus and then tested to see whether rhinovirus stuck to their fingers. More than half of the participants got the virus on their fingertips 48 hours after the mucus was smeared.

Communications

Bridging the Language Gap in Public Health

To provide useful and current public health information, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) translates its communication products into many different languages. CDC provides health and safety messages in several languages during emergencies, natural disasters, severe weather, and disease outbreaks. As part of its efforts to reach people of multiple cultures in appropriate languages, CDC has created emergency communication such as: tips for preventing heat-related illness (in Haitian Creole, French, German, Portuguese and Spanish); answers to frequently-asked questions about a radiation emergency (in Chinese, Filipino, French, German, and Spanish); Guidelines on emergency wound care (in Burmese, Spanish and Vietnamese); essential facts on blast injuries (in Bengali, Chinese, French, Hindi, Marathi, Spanish and Urdu); and a factsheet on preventing illness from food and water after a hurricane or flood (available in Haitian Creole, French, German, Portuguese, Spanish and Vietnamese). Please share these translated messages with local emergency responders, healthcare providers and public health professionals as well as to the general public.

Improving First Responders' Communication Tools

After the terrorist attacks on New York on September 11, 2001, first responders deployed search-and-rescue robots to help find survivors. The robots were supposed to be controlled via radio signals, but the radio signals were lost between the transmitter, the robot, and the person controlling the robot. Researchers at the National Institute of Standards and Technology are working to improve the devices used by first responders. Tunnel research revealed a "sweet spot", a particular frequency in mines, subways and tunnels where radio signals travel farthest. That discovery may help researchers design wireless systems that are more likely to function in a disaster.

CDC eHealth Data Briefs

The National Center for Health Marketing is currently undertaking social media research to strengthen the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's knowledge of the demographic makeup and use of their interactive media channels. Current data briefs for blogs, podcasts, text messaging, internet users, mobile users and others are posted online.

Progress in Public Health Preparedness

The Association of State and Territorial Health Officers (ASTHO) is pleased to announce that the presentations from the Fourth Annual Directors of Public

Health Preparedness meeting in Seattle have been posted to the ASTHO website. [Presentations](#) include: public health and health system response to the June 2008 flooding in Indiana, Iowa and Wisconsin; selected presentations from six regional Strategic National Stockpile workshops; and notes from the Region IV Unified Planning Coalition.

Pandemic Planning

Is a Pandemic a Stafford Act “Major Disaster”?

This Congressional Research Service Report explores whether or not a pandemic of influenza qualifies as a major disaster as outlined in the Stafford Act. They concluded that the Stafford Act could be used in a pandemic influenza emergency without adding language to the current definition enacted by Congress. The [full report](#) is available online.

Regional News

Region 6 Potential Hospital Evacuation

The hot topic in the current grant cycle and hospital accreditation requirements is related to hospital planning for evacuation, both internally and externally. There was construction in front of this particular hospital, working on a high pressure natural gas delivery line. The county's Emergency Operations Center, sole EMS agency, and forty-seven long-term care patients were within a quarter mile of the construction. Region 6 faced a situation where there was potential to evacuate an entire hospital.

To prepare for an emergency related to the construction, the region pre-positioned an Acute Care Center pod containing supplies. Further, they pre-determined a shelter area, over a mile away (per HazMat standards). Region 6 worked in partnership with emergency management, Emergency Medical Services, and hospital staff to collaboratively position resources and stay on alert status until the project was completed.

Thankfully the situation had a good outcome and resources were not needed. This type of incident, however, stresses the importance of collaboration between hospitals and Emergency Management.

Other News

Guilty Plea Entered in 2001 Michigan Tech Eco-Terrorism

On October 15, Ian Jacob Wallace of New York, [pled guilty](#) to the November 5, 2001, attempted fire-bombing of U.S. Forest Service property located on the campus of Michigan Technological University in Houghton, Michigan. Wallace entered the plea as part of a plea-agreement with the United States that called for his cooperation in ongoing investigations of similar acts committed on behalf of the Earth Liberation Front. In exchange for his guilty plea and for his assistance in investigating other similar acts, Wallace was charged with attempted destruction of U.S. government property, instead of more serious federal arson charges. The plea agreement also provides that he will not be federally prosecuted for similar acts in Wisconsin and Minnesota.

Training and Education

Date/Time	Event Description	Location
NA	Online Training Opportunities There are many organization offering a range of online training opportunities. Please see this link for a list of online emergency preparedness training opportunities.	Online
Nov. 13, 2008	The NIOSH DREAM Workshop The workshop will convene subject matter experts, stakeholders and other interested parties to improve the prevention of disease and injury to people who work through supporting research, promotion of best practices, communication of effective policies, and engagement in productive partnerships. The broad aim of the breakout sessions is to seek stakeholder input in shaping a NIOSH research agenda for direct-reading methods as related to worker exposure in the workplace. The proceedings of the workshop will be published on the NIOSH Direct-Reading Methods website for comments.	Hilton Crystal City - Washington, DC
Nov. 13, 2008	International Bird Flu Summit Top leaders and key decision-makers of major companies representing a broad range of industries will meet with distinguished scientists, public health officials, law enforcers, first responders, and other experts to discuss pandemic prevention, preparedness, response and recovery. Breakout topics will include (but are not limited to): surveillance and data management, community strategies, businessbased planning, and school-based planning.	Las Vegas, NV
Nov. 14, 2008	Budgeting and Cost Accounting This two-session course (November 14 and 21) will cover the development and use of budgets as planning and management tools for organizations. Considering the organization as a firm that must be managed within a set of financial constraints, participants will develop an understanding of those constraints, in terms of costs and revenues. Participants will learn how to use various measures of cost in making, planning, and operating decisions for their organizations. As part of the course work, participants will apply concepts in the course to situations faced by their organizations. Note, the fee for this course is \$135. To register and for more information, please visit the Michigan Public Health Training Center website or email mphtc@umich.edu.	Taylor, MI (734) 615-9439
Nov. 18, 2008	In-Depth Radiation Training CDC's NCEH/ATSDR Office of Terrorism Preparedness and Emergency Response is sponsoring attendance at this course. Training and registration costs are provided. Your agency will need to pay for attendee transportation, per diem, and lodging arrangements. Please have those interested in attending contact Nisha Kapil by email at NHK6@cdc.gov or by phone.	Oak Ridge, TN (770) 488-3365

Date/Time	Event Description	Location
Nov. 20-21, 2008	Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Train-the-Trainer This <u>two-day course</u> will provide participants with the skills to teach the CERT program, while emphasizing the basic course along with the development of a program in their community. Previous experience providing and facilitating instruction for adults is desirable. Note: This is a course for CERT trainers and program managers-not for individuals desiring to become CERT team members.	Auburn Hills, MI
Dec. 4, 2008	Developing Volunteer Resources This <u>one-day course</u> is designed to cover a broad range of issues in disaster volunteerism expanding on the concepts presented in the prerequisite FEMA Independent Study course, Managing and Developing Volunteers. Topics will include spontaneous volunteerism in disasters, liability issues, marketing, recruitment, and recognition of volunteers. There is no fee for this course. Visit the Michigan State Police website for further details and registration information.	Lansing, MI
Feb. 3, 2009	Emergency Preparedness for Persons with Disabilities and Special Needs This workshop will examine existing and/or needed standards for emergency preparedness for persons with disabilities and special needs. This event will work to identify what standards currently exist and in what areas new standards need to be developed, followed by actionable recommendations for the timely development of standards in the identified needs areas. Please contact Matt Deane by email at mdeane@ansi.org for more information.	Kellogg Conference Hotel - Washington, DC



Mailing Address:
 Office of Public Health Preparedness
 Capitol View Building - 201 Townsend Street - Lansing, MI 48913
 (517) 335-8150 — <http://www.michigan.gov/ophp>



This publication is supported by Cooperative Agreement Number U90/CCU517018-08 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of CDC.